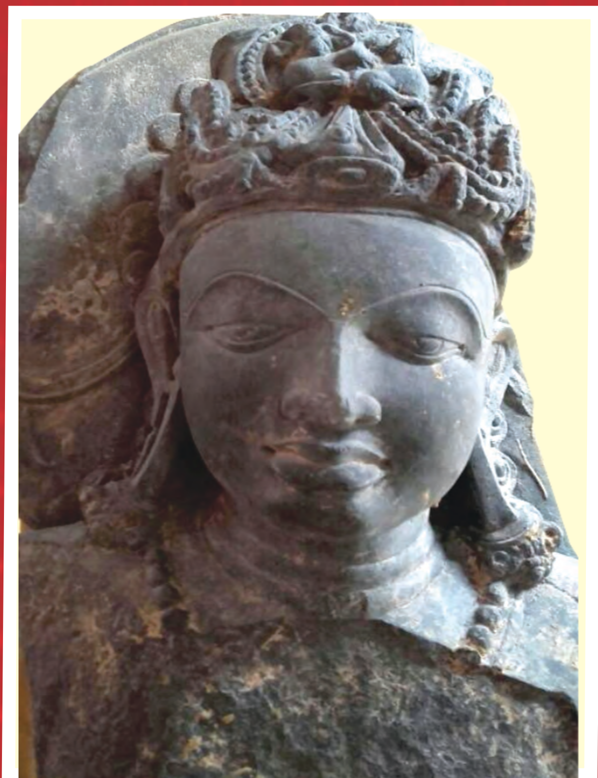
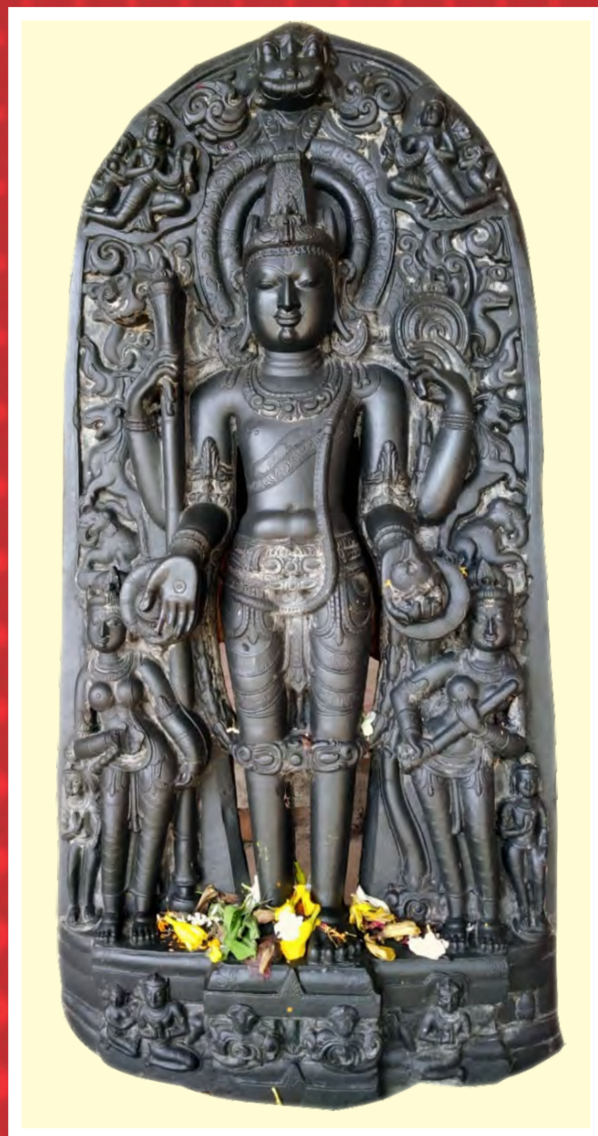






A Survey Of Early-Mediaeval Sculptures In Mithila

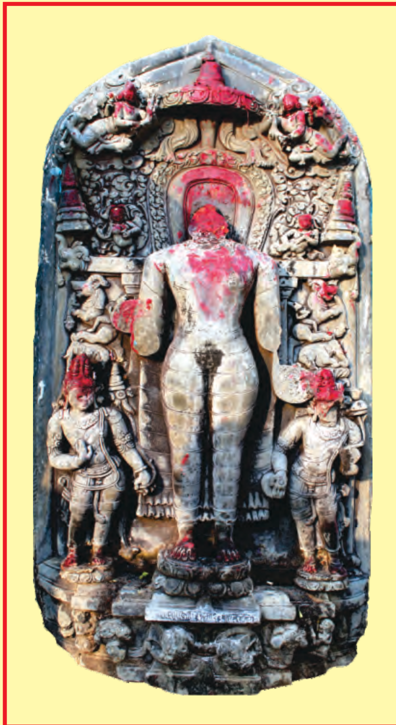
By

The Maharajadhiraj

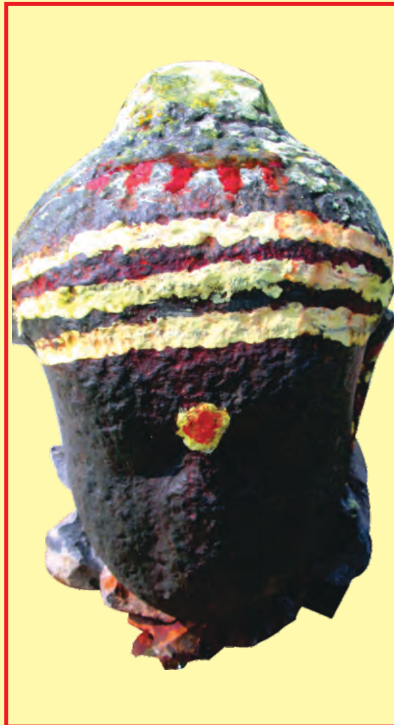
Lakshmishwar Singh

Museum, Darbhanga

Shiva Kumar Mishra



Buddha, Korthu, Darbhanga



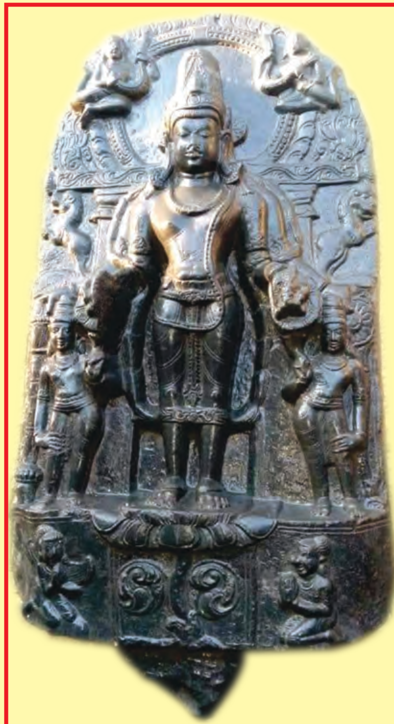
Head of The Buddha, Jarhatiya, Madhubani



Tara, Andharatharhi, Madhubani



Avalokiteshvara, Hatidih, Darbhanga



Vishnu, Ganol, Madhepura



Vishnu, Santanagar, Madhubani

Cover Page Photos : Upper- (Left) Vishnu, Mukteshvarsthan, Madhubani, (Right) Maharaja Lakshmishwar Singh, Lower-Vishnu, Ojhoul, Darbhanga

A Survey of Early-Mediaeval Sculptures in Mithila by The Maharajadhiraj Lakshmishwar Singh Museum, Darbhanga

Mithila is known as a cultural region. One can easily trace its existence right from ancient days. The scriptures of the earliest times describe its cultural merits in unmistakable terms. The region enjoyed political autonomy to a great extent until the beginning of the colonial rule. The continuity of political identity for centuries seemingly re-enforced its cultural boundaries. Mithila region occupied an important position in the socio - religious history of India through the ages. Traditionally this region is surrounded by river Gandak in the West, in south by great river Ganga, in east by river Kosi and in north by the mountain of great Himalayan range. The present divisions of Purnea, Kosi, northern parts of Munger and Bhagalpur, Darbhanga and Tirhut of Bihar and Terai area of Nepal was part of ancient Mithila.

In 1880, Maharaja Lakshmishwara Simha occupied the throne of Darbhanga Raj and was succeeded in 1898 by Maharaja Rameshwara Simha. He belonged to the famous Khandavala dynasty of Mithila. For the kings of Mithila there was the glorious tradition of the philosoper king Raja Janaka. And quite in keeping with this tradition the Khandavala rulers also took more pride in being called learned panditas than wealthy Rajas. A distinguished scion of an illustrious House, a zealous patron of learning and art, a ruler of unique foresight and under- standing, a great patriot and legislator, a bold reformer and, above all, a gentlemen par excellence, Maharaja Lakshmishwara Simha was one of the few charming personalities of the age whose influence was keenly felt in all the walks of Maithila life. He was born on 25 September 1858. He was only two years old when his father died. On the pretext of the minerhood of the heir apparent the Darbhanga Raj was placed under the 'court of wards'. Thus the 'court of wards' paid close attention to the upbringing as well as the education of the Darbhanga princes. He was a voracious reader and could afford to indulge his taste for wide range of books. He was a great lover of art and music.

Maharajadhiraj Lakshmishwar Singh Museum, Darbhanga was established in 1979. The museum was organised with the gifted objects obtained from Darbhanga Raj family. The museum situated on the eastern

bank of the Mansarovar or Digghi Pokhar near Darbhanga Railway Station. The museum is mainly famous for its decorative art objects. Its possess about fifteen hundred of art objects carved on various medium of expressions.

Apart from works of other mediums, the museum preserves beautiful pieces of ivory carvings. Most of the objects are from Murshidabad. It is interesting to note that on one of the ivory carvings the name of the artist and place is mentioned. It is a well-known fact that Murshidabad was a great centre of carving art during the medieaval period.

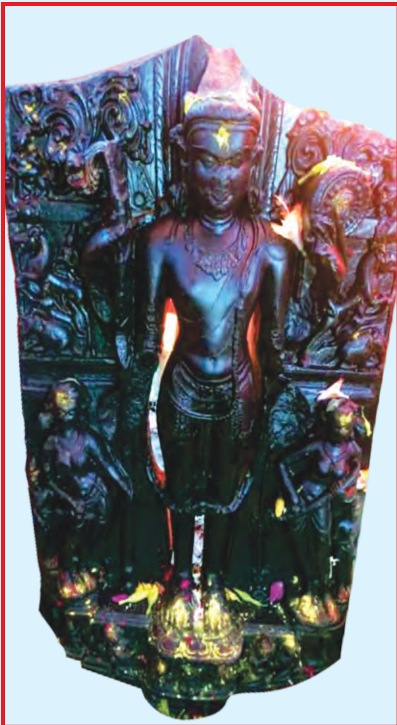
Maharajadhiraj Lakshmishwar Singh Museum, Darbhanga conducted the survey work in Mithila region in joint collaboration with the Maithili Sahitya Sansthan, Patna under direction of Dr. Shiva Kumar Mishra (Assistant Curator), assisted by Shri Bhairab Lal Das (Secretary, Maithili Sahitya Sansthan), Dr. Ashok Kumar Sinha (Directorate of Museum, Bihar), Chandra Prakash (Gallery Assistant, M.L. Singh Museum), Dr. Sushant Kumar and Murari Kumar Jha (Maithili Sahitya Sansthan).

A good number of early Pala, Pala & Sen sculptures as well as of Karnata period have been noticed in Mithila region also. Images of Vishnu, Surya, Durga, Uma-Maheshvara, Ganesha, Sadyojata, Narasimha, Brahma, Agni, Varaha, Hanu-Bhairava, Bhairava are important Hindu deities depicted by the artists of this region. Among the Buddhist deities Buddha, Avalokiteshvara, Tara are important who found favour from the artists. I am highly thankful to Dr. Umesh Chandra Dwivedi, Former Director, Museums, Government of Bihar and Dr. Jalaj Kumar Tiwari, Assistant Superintending Archaeologist, Archaeological survey of India, Vaishali Museum, for their co-operation in various ways.

- Dr. Shiva Kumar Mishra

Assistant Curator,

M.L. Singh Museum, Darbhanga



Vishnu, Mahesiya, Sitamarhi



Vishnu, Harari, Andharatharhi, Madhubani



Vishnu, Dwalakh, Madhepur, Madhubani



Vishnu, Jageshvarsthan, Ghoghardiha, Madhubani



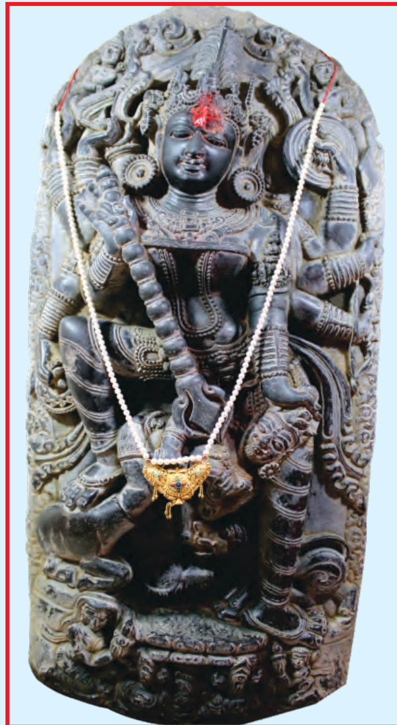
Vishnu, Dih-Rampur, Darbhanga



Surya, Dilahi, Darbhanga



Surya, Raghepura, Darbhanga



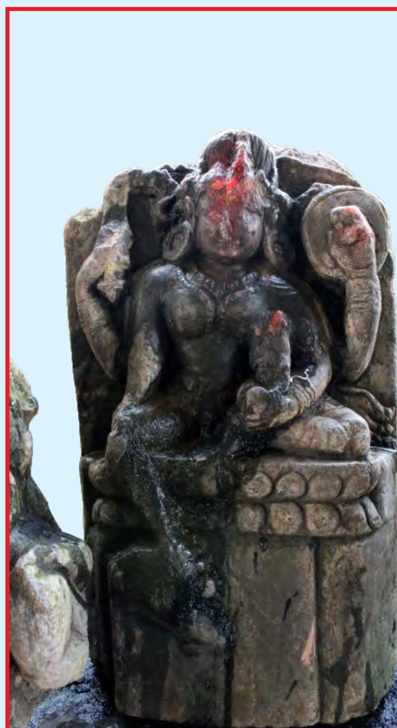
Mahishasuramardini, Baheri, Darbhanga



Vishnu, Dhepura, Piprouliya, Madhubani



Uma-Maheshvara, Tirhuta, Babubarhi, Madhubani



Durga, Bhairava-Ugana, Bisfi, Madhubani



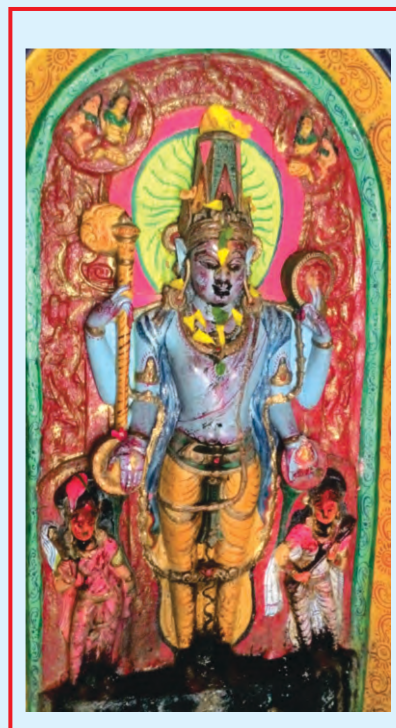
Durga, Bisfi, Madhubani



Vishnu, Borba, Darbhanga



Vishnu, Pokharam, Darbhanga



Vishnu, Kadirabad, Darbhanga



Vishnu, Kusheshvarsthan, Darbhanga



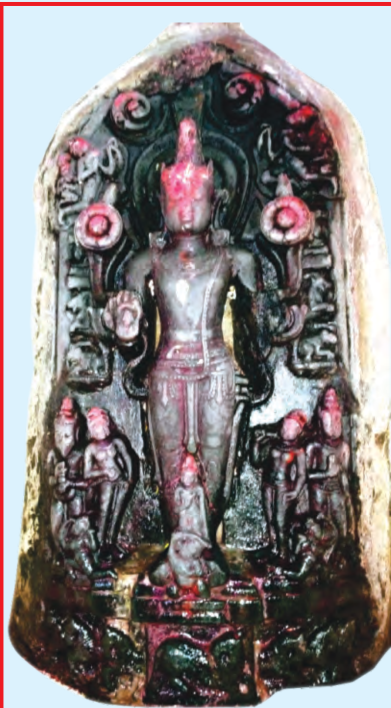
Vishnu, Belon, Benipur, Darbhanga



Vishnu, Mahinam, Benipur, Darbhanga



Bhairava, Raghunathpur, Darbhanga



Surya, Dekuli, Darbhanga



Vishnu, Areraj, East Champaran



Sadyojata (Parvati), Mukteshvarsthan, Madhubani



Vishnu, Areraj, East Champaran



Mahishasuramardini, Mukteshvarsthan, Madhubani



Shivalinga, Khojpur, Madhubani



Ganesha, Mukteshvarsthan, Madhubani



Surya, Patori, Sattarkataiya,Saharsa



Surya, Andharatharhi, Madhubani



Bhairava, Thalwara, Darbhanga



Vishnu, Andharatharhi, Madhubani



Garuda-Narayana, Hardvar, Ghanshyampur, Darbhanga



Surya, Baliya, Madhubani



Durga, Kali Mandir, Rajnagar, Madhubani



Parvati, Sanghoul, Begusarai



Vishnu, Belon, Benipur, Darbhanga



Vishnu, Sipahgiri, Madhubani



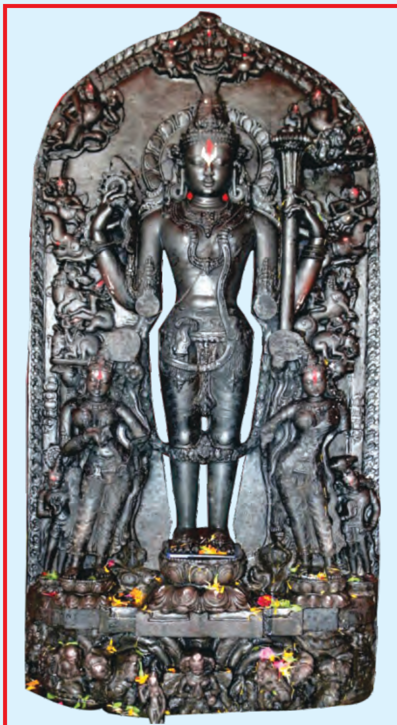
Vishnu, Piparouliya, Darbhanga



Vishnu, Ojhoul, Darbhanga



Surya, Baruar, Madhubani



Vishnu, Marukiya, Madhubani



Vishnu, Bankatta, Madhubani



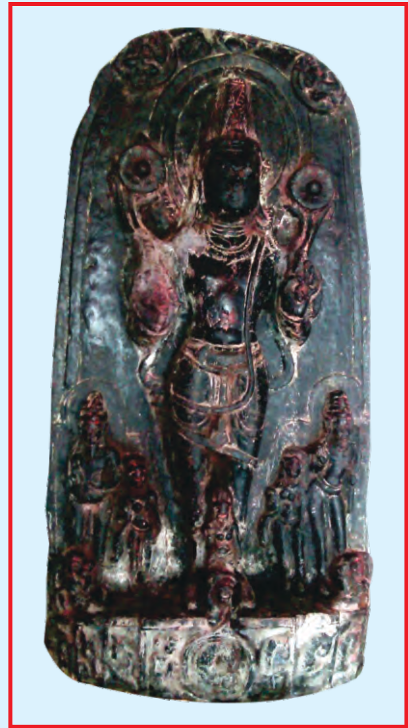
Surya, Bankatta, Madhubani



Uma-Maheshvara, Mangarouni, Madhubani



Mahishasurmardini, Kojpur, Madhubani



Surya, Bankatta, Madhubani



Durga, Damodarpur, Madhubani



Durga, Pachahi,Madhepur, Madhubani



Chamunda, Kanthudih, Darbhanga



Ganesha, Laheriyasarai, Darbhanga



Vishnu, Dhankoul, Jale (p.s), Darbhanga



Vishnu, Bedouli, Darbhanga



Ganesh, Piparouliya, Darbhanga



Brahma, Dharhara, Sarai, Vaishali



Vishnu,Akour, Madhubani



Bhairava, Kusheshvarsthan, Darbhanga



Narasimha, Baika, Madhubani



Brahma-Vishnu, Sahodara West Champaran



Ganesha, Korthu, Darbhanga



Varaha-Vishnu, Salempur, Madhubani



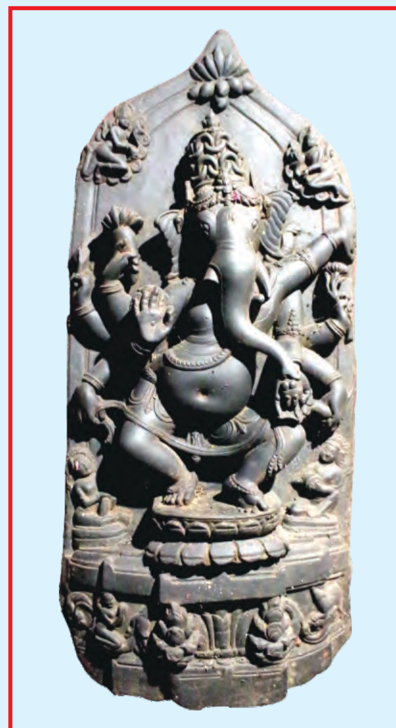
Unidentified Panel, Ekadasha-Radra Temple, Mangarouni, Madhubani



Vishnu, Rathouns, Bisfi, Madhubani



Vishnu, Havidih, Darbhanga



Ganesha, Havidih, Darbhanga



Ganesha, Bhuvaneshvarsthan, Bhagwatipur, Madhubani



Kartikeya, Basuara, Madhubani



Gaja-Lakshmi on Door-jamb, Korthu, Darbhanga



Saraswati, Mangarouni, Madhubani



Garuda, Mangarouni, Madhubani



Annapurnadevi, Mangarouni, Madhubani



Bal-Gopal, Margarouni, Madhubani



Ganga, Mangarouni, Madhubani



Durga, Mangarouni, Madhubani



Garuda, Mangarouni, Madhubani



Vishnu, Sanpatahi, Babubarhi, Madhubani



Surya, Bhagavatipur, Madhubani



Durga, Dekuli, Darbhanga



Vishnu, Bhairava-Ugana, Bisfi, Madhubani



Uma-Maheshvara, Bhairava -Ugana, Bisfi, Madhubani



Surya, Havidih, Darbhanga



Brahma, Bhachchhi, Baheri, Darbhanga



Surya, Godhail-Tumoul, Ghanshyampur, Darbhanga



Ganesha,Baruar, Babubarhi, Madhubani (Stolen)



Vishnu, Rajnagar, Madhubani



Vishnu, Samaila,Keoti, Darbhanga



Temple-Structure (Broken), Yogvana, Sitamarhi



Ganesha, Bhojpandoul, Madhubani



Agni, Dilahi, Darbhanga



Durga, Lohna, Madhubani



Surya, Arai, Darbhanga



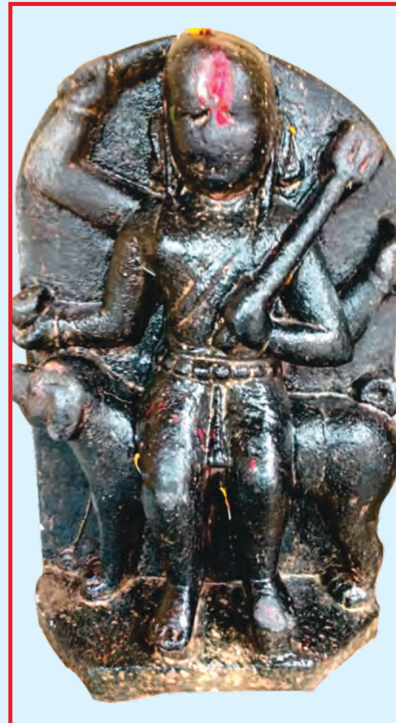
Vishnu, Bhawanipur, Madhubani



Vishnu, Nehra, Darbhanga



Surya, Nehra, Darbhanga



Bhairava, Vidyapati Nagar, Samastipur



Surya, Gangeshvarsthan, Darbhanga



Mahishasuramardini, Baligaon, Baheri, Darbhanga



Devi , Dudahi, Babubarhi, Madhubani



Ganesha, Bhachchhi, Baheri, Darbhanga



Uma-Maheshvara, Kulhariya-Parsa, Babubarhi, Madhubani



Brahma, Vaishali



Bhairava, Bhawanipur, Madhubani



Hanu-Bhairava, Mangarouni, Madhubani



Surya, Subas-Kesho, Muzaffarpur



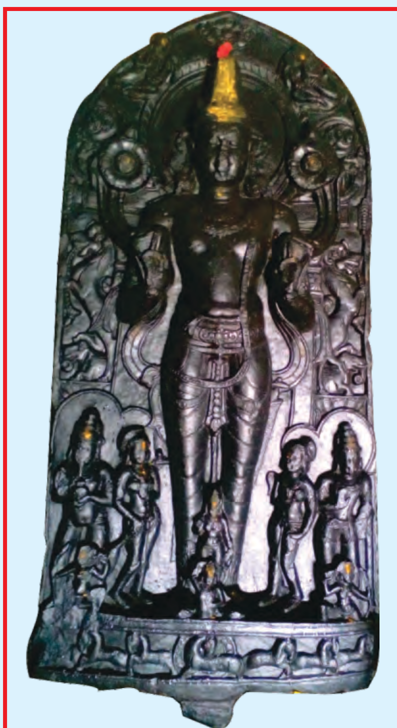
Vishnu, Ladaho, Darbhanga



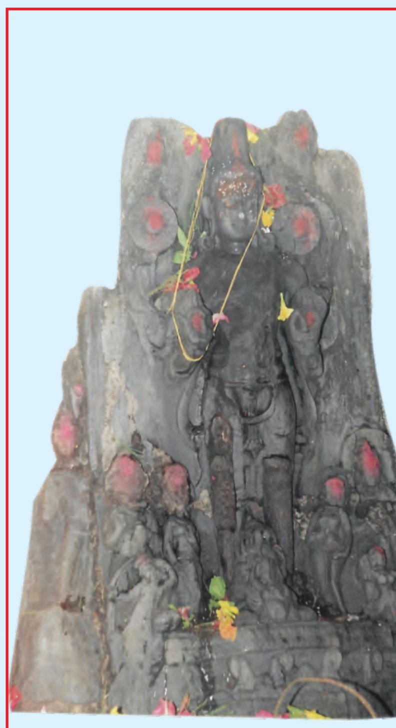
Vishnu, Akour, Madhubani



Vishnu, Saho-Parari, Darbhanga



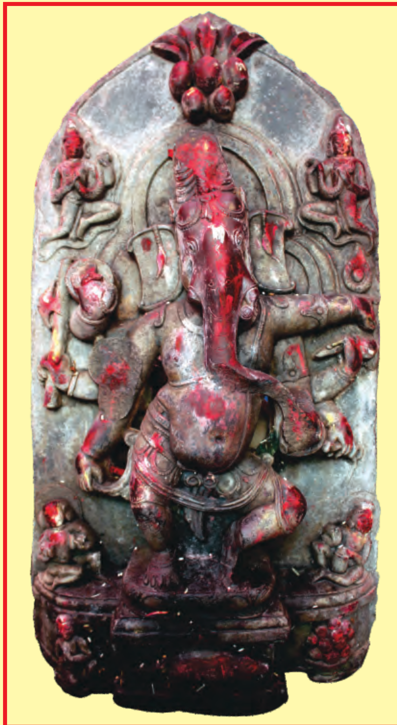
Surya, Havidih, Darbhanga



Surya, Bhojpandoul, Madhubani



Uma-Maheshvara, Bhojpandoul, Madhubani



Ganesha, Ghanshyampur, Darbhanga (Stolen)



Ganesha, Lahvar, Keoti, Darbhanga



Ganesha, Dekuli, Darbhanga



Ganesha, Gangeshvarsthan, Darbhanga



Vishnu, Pokharam, Darbhanga



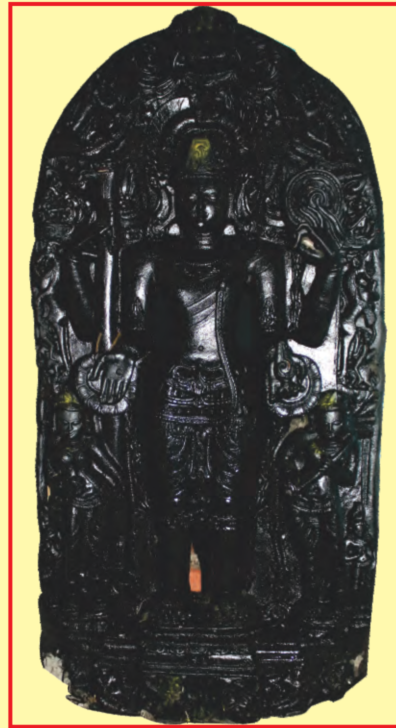
Uma-Maheshvara, Hardvar, Ghanshyampur, Darbhanga



Vishnu, Ugana-Mahadeva, Bhawanipur, Madhubani



Vishnu, Tharhi,Khoja, Ladaniya, Madhubani



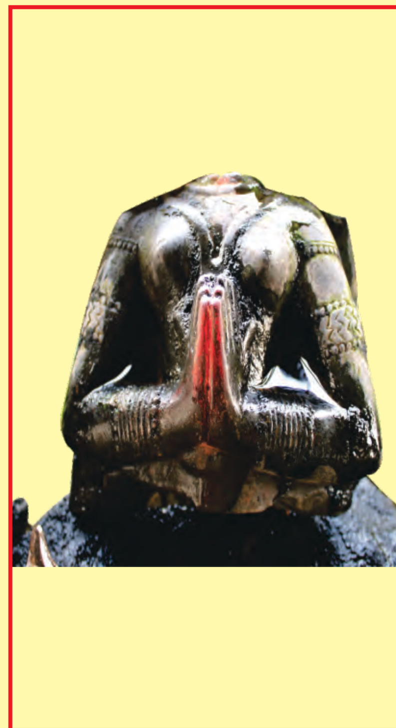
Vishnu, Ojhoul, Darbhanga



Surya, Ghanshyampur, Darbhanga



Slab carved in low relief, Ojhoul, Darbhanga



Female deity or Doner, Bhairava- Ugana, Bisfi, Madhubani

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